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MONTANA STATE LIBRARY

930 EAST LYNDAL AVE. HELENA, MONTANA 59601

July 31, 1979

MEMORANDUM

TO: Online Users
FROM: Beth Givens
Coordinator of Library Services

PLEASE RETURN

SUBJ: Online Report #5: April 1 - June 30, 1979

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Online to Continue

The 1979 Legislature approved the Montana State Library Budget, which includes the Montana Online Reference Service. The service will continue for two more years. Patrons will continue to be able to receive searches at no cost.

In addition to its continuation, coverage of the online service will be broadened. Passage of HB427 and the availability of coal severance tax funds for statewide basic library services means that the 12 counties that have not contracted for services through federations will be able to obtain free interlibrary loan service (in addition to the counties that have already contracted for services). It also means that the Montana Online Reference Service will be opened up to them.

Statistical Report

From April through June 1979, a total of 741 searches were conducted on 248 requests. 27% of the requests were from public library users; 29% were from college and university libraries; 26% were from state agencies; and 19% were from special libraries and MSL for internal use. Search volume is down 20% from the previous quarter. An average of 3 data bases were searched per request.

Wanted: Repeat Users - Following Up on Online Requests

The majority of the online evaluation forms returned to us indicate satisfaction by the patron. Some patrons, however, express dissatisfaction. The most common complaint is that the references retrieved are not relevant to the requested subject.

You can suggest to the disgruntled patron that the search request be revised and that the search be re-run. Also, you can suggest that the patron talk directly with the State Library searcher via telephone. If there are one or two references on the irrelevant printout which are close to what the patron wants, photocopy them and send them along with the revised search form. We can use the "descriptors" when conducting the revised search.

We appreciate your help in following up on the patron's search requests.

Outreach to Potential Users

A satisfied user of the online service wrote the following:

...My work requires access to all sorts of literature that my local library cannot provide for reasons of cost, space and materials, but not of effort. Living in rural Montana, access to various literature is an acute and difficult problem. Your on-line reference service plays a vital role in increasing the accessibility and availability of literature banks...

This user has expressed the main objective of the Online Reference Service - access to information that libraries, large and small, simply cannot provide on their own. The online service is a reference back-up for all of Montana's libraries.

Reaching potential users, and in particular, public library users such as the one who wrote us the above note, is important. If you have suggestions on ways to reach potential users, let me know. Your suggestions can be included in future Online Reports.

If you are promoting your library's services through a special event such as an open house, and if you would like an online demonstration to be a part of the day's activities, please let me know. Possibly I or another searcher from the Reference Department would be able to attend.

Reading between the Lines - the List of "Selected Search Topics"

The List of "Selected Search Topics," included in each Online Report, can be more than simply a curiosity or a source of entertainment. By thinking about the kinds of patrons who have requested each of the searches on the list, you can gather ideas about who to contact in order to promote the use of the service.

Aside from the academic users, requests of the Online Reference Service for the past 3 months have come from:

mental health professionals
public health nurses
educators
grants writers
city sanitation engineer
consulting geologists
city and county planners
lawyers gathering information
for cases
private industry employees

environmental impact statement researchers
(state and federal government)
home economist
agricultural extension agents and other
agricultural researchers
employment program planners and counselors
social service program employees
historical researchers - freelance writers of
novels and nonfiction

Tidbits

DATA BASE LISTS are still available. The ten-page lists which describe the 100-plus data bases searchable through the Online Reference Service are available from the State Library. Request them from the Reference Department. Specify the number you want - 30 max. per library.

REQUEST FORMS are also available. If you are not now using the form dated 7/78 in the lower right hand corner, please request a supply of them from the Reference Department.

Legislative Reference Questionnaire

Enclosed is a questionnaire on your experiences during the past legislative session. Knowing your needs will help us prepare for the 1981 legislature. Please tell us what you had and didn't have, and what you want. Return the questionnaire (one per library) to the Reference Department. If you have any questions, contact Cindy Stewart.

MONTANA ONLINE REFERENCE SERVICE: Selected Search Topics - April through March 1979

Sciences

catalytic converters on farm machines
 volatile materials in coal
 using geothermal heat in greenhouses
 steel studs for home construction
 hydroponics in Montana
 anabolic steroids
 effects of ingesting sugars on behavior
 effect of DES on males
 in-site mining of uranium
 process of freeze-drying foods
 effects of excessive nickel consumption in mammals
 riparian habitat management
 construction of aerated lagoons for waste water treatment
 systemic pesticides
 power plant costs
 environmental problems of abandoned underground mines
 methanol derived from wood products
 non-monogamous mateship systems in birds
 pre-Cambrian radiometric dates of Western U.S.
 environmental impacts of natural gas pipelines
 phenothiazine toxicity in cattle
 computer-based ground water models
 effects of dams on harlequin ducks
 noise reduction in the urban environment
 dental instrument design
 acoustic reflex decay (audiology)
 effects of low frequency sound waves on living organisms
 laundry practices of residents in pristine water areas
 movement of sewage components in soil
 tempeh from soybeans or grains
 Lactobacillus sanfrancisco - sourdough bread bacteria
 etiology of soil-borne fungus
 Montana termite

Humanities

Legal interpretation of Louis Reil rebellion
 Johann Schiller's drama trilogy
 frequency of phonemes in languages other than English
 Oscar Merrill Hartzell swindle of 1933
 history of COMINCO

Social Sciences

sociopathic adult males
 expansion of USSR navy, 1970-79
 effects of divorce on men
 health promotion and maintenance for the elderly
 industrial health nursing
 determinates of American Indian employment
 literacy rate, 1760-90
 aversion relief
 effectiveness of pre-school education for handicapped children
 assimilation of Japanese into American culture
 agoraphobia
 alcohol and drug abuse in developmentally disabled adults
 female drug addicts
 effect of middle ear problems on learning and achievement of school age children
 interpersonal confirmation
 effect of textbooks' syntactic structure on students' comprehension
 residential programs for unwed mothers
 home bound education
 regional shopping centers

Administration, Business, Management, Government

states' alcoholic beverage regulations
 negotiation of fringe benefits in public sector
 methodology of grants management
 impact of tourism on cost of providing local govt. services
 job sharing
 effect of Resource Conservation & Recovery Act on electric utility industry & open-cut coal mines
 orientation and training of governing & advisory boards
 cost analysis of production of alcohol from food products
 position or job classification systems
 grants for community arts centers

Humanities, cont'd

Ming period of Chinese history, 1368-1644
 Munja caste of the Kafa of Ethiopia

May 4, 1979

AVAILABILITY OF LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION
Montana State Library Reference Dept. and
Montana Legislative Council Library

WHAT DO YOU HAVE?

- | | | |
|---|-----------|----------|
| 1. Does your library have the Montana Code Annotated? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 2. Does your library receive copies of bills during the legislative session? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 3. Does your library receive copies of bill status sheets during the session? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 4. Does your library receive schedules of legislative committee hearings? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 5. Does your library maintain current files of clippings or information on subjects of importance to your community that are being considered in the Legislature? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 6. Does your library keep lists of your legislators, their addresses, and voting records? | _____ YES | _____ NO |

WHAT WERE YOU ASKED?

- | | | |
|---|---|----------|
| 1. Did your library receive requests for legislative information during the 1979 legislative session? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 2. What kinds of information did people ask for? (check all that apply) | | |
| _____ bills/bill status | _____ subject information | |
| _____ committee schedules | _____ follow-up information on committees | |
| _____ other. (please specify) _____ | | |
| 3. Was the information asked for available in your library? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 4. Did you use other sources to obtain information to fill requests for legislative information? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| IF the answer to this is YES, please indicate which sources were useful. | | |
| _____ Federation headquarters | _____ toll free legislative telephone information service | |
| _____ State Library | _____ other (please specify) _____ | |
| _____ Legislators | | |

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

- | | | |
|--|--|----------|
| 1. Would you be interested in participating in a workshop or training session on political/legislative information? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| IF the answer is YES, please indicate any subjects/areas you would like to see discussed. _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| _____ | | |
| 2. Is there a need for someone to maintain information on political issues in Montana, ie campaigns, candidates, elections, proposed legislation, legislative actions, etc.? | _____ YES | _____ NO |
| 3. Whose responsibility should it be to maintain information on political issues? | | |
| _____ local public libraries | _____ elected officials | |
| _____ State Library | _____ Legislature | |
| _____ academic libraries | _____ other. (please specify) _____ | |
| 4. What kind of information would be of interest? (check all that apply) | | |
| _____ clippings on current issues | _____ formal legislative publications (Codes, Journals, Legislative reviews, etc.) | |
| _____ Legislative voting records | _____ other (specify) _____ | |
| _____ subject lists of bills from each session | | |
| _____ addresses of elected officials | | |

Please indicate the type of library for which you work.

_____ academic _____ public _____ school _____ special _____ other (specify) _____

PLEASE RECORD ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE BACK. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

